

PE1540/G

Andrew Russell Email of 5 February 2016

Please take this message as a plea to the Scottish Government to take a far more strategic and long-term approach to securing regular and reliable access to Argyll via the A83. The current web of knitting stretching up the hillside is mistrusted and lampooned by everyone. It may (or may not) catch debris from a landslide, but it evidently does not prevent disruption as the debris is removed.

It is essential to the economic life of Argyll between Oban and the Mull of Kintyre that businesses, investors and residents have complete confidence in their communications with Central Scotland. At the moment, they don't. And the situation is made worse by the inability to check the state of the road via the Traffic Scotland website, the two web-cams being out of order - appearing to demonstrate that nobody at Traffic Scotland cares very much.

The present state of affairs would not be tolerated for one moment by coastal communities in any other part of Europe, especially Norway with which Scotland likes to compare itself. Take a look at their Coastal Highway.

There are a number of long-term, permanent solutions which have been put forward by experts. Despite the very high initial cost, may I urge the Scottish Government to realise that no programmes of economic or social development will ever succeed in Argyll without first making communication with the rest of the country as easy as possible.

Andrew Russell